

The Drama and Music New of the Theaters

THE WEEK'S PLAY BILLS

"FLORODORA," MRS. LANGTRY AND GRACE GEORGE AT ENGLISH'S.

Vaudeville at the Grand—Sensational Drama at the Park—Burlesque at the Empire.

The current week will be another busy one at English's, where good attractions are now following each other in quick succession. The first offering of the week will be "Florodora," the operatic comedy success of three continents, which returns to Indianapolis in a new dress which is said to make it brighter and better than ever. The production will be given here Tuesday and Wednesday evenings and at a Wednesday matinee, and in looking into the details of this attraction it is pleasing to say that the prospects are that it will be given a splendid presentation. The company now giving the pretty musical comedy on the road numbers seventy people and carries its own orchestra, so it is pretty safe to say that Indianapolis will hear the music of "Tell Me, Pretty Maiden," "Under the Shade of the Palms," "I Want to Be a Military Man," and the many other melodious numbers with which the piece abounds rendered as never rendered before.

In the company are several favorites who have already made their mark on the American stage and in this special organization. Messrs. Fisher and Ryley, who own the American and Canadian rights of "Florodora," have selected each player and singer with a view to his or her telling worth. Miss Anna Boyd, who is well remembered here as the dashing widow of Hoyt's "A Trip to Chinatown," will play Lady Holyrood; Miss Louise Moore, an excellent likeness of whom appears on this page, will be the Dolores; Miss Lillian Spencer will portray Angela Giffain, and the favorite basso, Karl Stahl, will be seen and heard in the leading character of Cyrus Giffain. Budd Ross, a comedian new to Indianapolis, who is credited with being an untouchable funmaker, will have the leading comedy role of Anthony Tweedledee; M. J. Smith will play Captain Dargal, and the tenor, J. A. Wallerstedt, will enact the part of Lord Abercrombie. All in all, the cast, chorus, orchestra, scenery, costumes, and the other numerous features which should assure a magnificent production of this greatest of musical successes, will be given here without the slightest omission in any detail.

Following "Florodora," another important dramatic event will take place at English's when Mrs. Langtry, the famous English actress, will come to that theater for one performance Thursday night of her new play, "The Crossways," which is the joint production of herself and her leading man, J. Huntley Manners. The new play has been seen but once in England and that was upon the occasion of a "royal command" performance in London just before Mrs. Langtry and her English company set sail for New York a few months ago. She had been playing in the provinces and it was within a short time of her sailing date when King Edward summoned her to London to reopen the Imperial Theater for one night and give a presentation of the story which she and Mr. Manners had just written. The King and Queen, all the members of the royal family and all aristocratic London were present at what was one of the most brilliant theatrical events of recent years in England. It is considered proper for the London newspapers to print criticisms of a theatrical performance which has been given by royal command, and Mrs. Langtry sailed for America without having received a London verdict upon the merits or demerits of her play.

In New York the play was said by many of the critics to be well suited to the "Jesse Lily," and that no small matter at a moment when the art of the milliner plays so prominent a role in the theatrical world. Mrs. Langtry appears in the character of the Duchess of Keensbury and Mr. Manners, the co-author of the piece, plays the leading male role of Lord Scarlett. The engagement here is sure to attract a fashionable audience, and, judging by the many inquiries that have been received at the theater regarding the sale of seats, a very large one. The sale opens at English's box office to-morrow morning.

Grace George will hold the boards at English's next Friday and Saturday nights and at the Saturday matinee in her new play by Frances Aymar Matthews, entitled "Pretty Peggy." The piece is a treatment of the life of Peg Woffington, differing radically from that in earlier productions in that it shows the Covent Garden favorite as a young girl. Miss George, who is one of the most youthful of American actresses, is likely to appear in the piece to even better advantage than she did in "Under Southern Skies," her success of last season. The supporting company numbers fifty people, among whom may be mentioned Robert Lorraine, Annie Ward, Trifany, Carl Ekstrom, Margaret Mayo, Donald MacLaren, and Annie Milfin. The production, which was made under the direction of William A. Brady, is said to be second only to that of "Du Barry" in point of lavishness and beauty. Seven unique and artistic settings are shown, besides a number of gorgeous costumes.

The youthful love of Peg Woffington for David Garrick, a romance ignored in "Peg

GRACE GEORGE



Who will play "Pretty Peggy" at English's.

MRS. LANGTRY AND MR. LANG



In a scene from "The Crossways" at English's.

Woffington," "Masks and Faces," and other plays dealing with the life of the English actress, forms the theme of Frances Aymar Matthews' "Pretty Peggy." This love affair unquestionably was

BILLY CLIFFORD



In Vaudeville at the Grand.

the principal factor in the existence of Peg, and Miss Matthews is said to have made it very vital in the drama. "The Woffington" is shown culminating as a ship of a girl in Dublin, and her brilliant career at Covent Garden is traced up to the time of Garrick's dastardly treatment of her, when Miss Matthews reaches a tragic denouement. Miss George, whose performance at Garrick Theater, New York, last spring at the broadening of her art, should make a captivating Peg.

The Grand—Vaudeville.

One of the most pretentious acts ever seen on the vaudeville stage in this city will be that of Mme. Adelaide Herrmann, widow of Herrmann the Great, who comes as the headliner of the Grand's vaudeville bill this week. Mme. Herrmann is the only woman conjurer in the world, and she succeeded to all of the trade secrets of her husband, besides inventing many new ones of her own, all of which she presents in her latest specialty, which she calls "Magic in the Orient." Mme. Herrmann is a handsome woman as well as a most skillful magician. She carries with her a number of attendants, some special scenery, and stage settings and several gorgeous costumes. She is the female Ling Ching Foo of vaudeville.

Another chief act will be that presented by Mr. and Mrs. Bolyns, who have for several years been known throughout America as two of the best farceurs on the vaudeville stage. They appeared at the Grand two years ago and scored a substantial success in one of their little plays, "The Counsel for the Defense," a twenty-minute piece, this week. Billy Clifford, a monologist, singer and dancer, who was prevented from filling his engagement at the Grand the week before last on account of illness, has been engaged to appear this week in the place of James Thornton, who, to put it gently, is undergoing another spell of "indisposition" of the kind for which he has become famous. Clifford is a favorite here, and the substitution will not be regretted by his admirers. Another single act, which is the current bill whose work is always good is Ed Latell, who has few superiors as a musical comedian. Pauline Moran and her musical comedy, "The Counsel for the Defense," will introduce a specialty which will prove a novelty, as they make over twenty changes of costume in full view of the audience while portraying various types of people. Last, but by no means least, Gillett's musical dogs will have a place on the program. These animals are trained to perform many astonishing tricks, and are acrobatic marvels. The bill will be as good, if not better, than the one of last week at the Grand.

The Park—Two Border Dramas.

In the early days of the Park Theater under its present management before the old Park was destroyed by fire, there was no greater favorite among the stars who visited the theater than James H. Wallick, who came along annually with his sensational border dramas, "The Bandit King"

and "The Cattle King." Some years ago Mr. Wallick, who had made enough money out of these two big drawing-cards to branch out considerably in the theatrical business, began a career as an actor-manager in New York city, and devoted his time to the production of a number of melodramas such as "When London Sleeps," "The Queen of the Highway," "Held for Ransom," laying aside the two old plays which had brought fame and fortune to him. This season Mr. Wallick decided to revive the two border dramas, and several months ago he sent out on the road a strong company playing the stanch old standbys and the organization has been received everywhere with delight by theatergoers who enjoy the ultra-sensational on the stage.

Manager Wallick's company will be at the Park all of this week, and a most prosperous engagement is a foregone conclusion, for the regular Park patrons will be glad to see the old border dramas once again, presented on a very elaborate scale. "The Bandit King" will be given for the first half of the week, commencing with the matinee to-morrow afternoon and "The Cattle King" will fill in the latter half. John J. Farrell will play the leading role in "The Bandit King," and the company carries two carloads of special scenery. Besides John Gilbert, the character actor, and the well-known people with the organization, including Jack Webster and Miss Marie Peters.

The Empire—Burlesque.

The Empire's attraction for the current week will be Robie's Knickerbocker Burlesques, an organization that is well known in the burlesque theaters throughout the country. The company is made up of several comedians, singers and dancers that have attained prominence in their special lines of stage work, and there are sixteen chorus girls who are said to be able to sing in pleasing voices as well as to present attractive appearances. The show will be of the usual style of burlesque entertainment with a musical travesty at the beginning and end of the bill and

MME. ADELAIDE HERRMANN



In a big vaudeville act at the Grand.

an olio of vaudeville features coming in between. Those who want to contribute to the specialty part of the program are McDonald and Cody, grotesque comedians, Kipp, the juggler, the Knickerbocker Quartet, Ferguson and Passmore, Frank Finney and two gymnasts who call themselves "Samson and Delilah," big, presumably suggested by the biblical names of Samson and Delilah, in exhibitions of strength and balancing. There will be daily matinees as usual.

Theatrical Notes.

Preparations for Nat Goodwin's tour in "A Midsummer Night's Dream" are going on steadily, although little publicity has been given the project. A liberal offer was made Lillian Russell for the role of Titania, but it did not approximate the sum which Miss Russell thought she was entitled to.

Jack Norworth and his wife, Miss Louise Dresser, both of whom are well known in Indianapolis, will be seen next season in an elaborate vaudeville sketch. Miss Dresser spent last summer in this city, and present she and Mr. Norworth are doing single turns in vaudeville, and both made big hits in New York last week.

Another Indianan has written a play. Paul Wiltach, who hails from Hoosierdom and who is known all over the country as a clever press agent, is the author of the drama that Adelaide Thurston is to produce next season. Its name is "Folly Primrose," and Miss Thurston thinks it is going to prove a great success. This actress will probably be seen in grand opera at the Metropolitan Opera House. Her tour next year will take in all of the cities in this part of the country.

It is understood that Anna Held's husband and manager, Florenz Ziegfeld, will next season produce a new opera, composed by Reginald De Koven, with the libretto by Alfred Klein. It is further said that Mr. Ziegfeld has bought the contract of William Castleman from the Royal Opera Company of Dresden, and that Mr. Castleman will make his debut in this country as the star of the new opera. The opera will be called "The Red Feather."

It looks as if Boston is to have five or six new theaters. David Belasco has plans for playhouses on three different sites in that city, and it is said that he has decided to build from one set of plans at once. Another architect is at work on plans for a theater to be built by a syndicate, and arrangements are also being made for the erection of a new burlesque house in the Hub. At this rate Boston will soon rival New York in a theatrical way.

The promoters of the Elks' old-time minstrels, which appear at English's Monday and Tuesday evenings, March 16 and 17,

BLANCHE RING



Who is making a hit in New York in "The Jewel of Asia."

are jubilant over the prospects of a splendid patronage and a fine performance. The stage manager is shaping the program and trimming it down just two hours and a half without a curtain fall. Some local olio features are being rehearsed that

LOUISE MOORE



In "Florodora" at English's.

are genuine novelties and thoroughly pleasing. The entertainment, it is promised, will be refreshingly different from the average local attraction, favoring strongly of a real, for-sure professional performance.

"Pickings from Buck," "Alaska," "Lovers' Lane," "Beyond Pardon," "Eight Bells," the Black Patti's Troubadours and the Hagenbeck animal show are among the early bookings at the park. "Beyond Pardon," which comes the week after next, is a production in which Fred G. Ross is presenting Lavinia Shannon, who was for two seasons the leading woman of the old Grand stock company here, and who is a great favorite among Indianapolis theatergoers. Miss Shannon has a strong role in the leading character of the drama, and her many friends in this city will accord her a hearty welcome when she comes to town.

Al G. Field, the well-known minstrel manager, writes to friends in Indianapolis that he will have the biggest minstrel show on the road next season that he has ever organized. He is going to bring over to America two European vaudeville acts that have never been seen in this country. The Field minstrels are now making a flying trip to the Pacific coast, playing all the large cities on the road both going and coming. The company, which is covering an immense amount of territory this season, will return to the East by the latter part of April and will close its season in New England, making a complete tour of the United States.

A week from next Friday night Mrs. Fiske will open her engagement of three performances at the Park Theater in her great play, "Mary of Magdala," and this will be an event of much significance so far as the local theatrical season is concerned. The great theater-going public has found in "Mary of Magdala" a drama to inspire and deeply impress, as well as one that touches the more immediate love of the pictorial and picturesque in the theater. The large audiences that thronged the Manhattan Theater during Mrs. Fiske's long New York run were truly cosmopolitan, showing all sorts and conditions of persons, the most prominent in society, the arts and the professions, as well as the well-to-do, yet all found something in the great Paul Heyse play that gripped their interest, exercised their emotions and satisfied their imaginations.

Kirke La Sells has finally set a definite date for the production of the new play, "Checkers." It will receive its initial presentation next Friday evening in Springfield, Ill., and will then be taken to St. Louis, the home of its author, Henry Blossom, for an engagement. Indianapolis will be among the first cities to see the play, as it will come to English's soon after the St. Louis engagement. Mrs. La Sells, New York until next fall, Thomas W. Ross is to appear as Checkers and June Van Bueckir, the pretty little actress who scored a hit here with "Sergeant James" of the Park two months ago, will have her first real opportunity in the role of Bert Barlow, the sweetheart of Checkers. There will be thirty-five speaking parts in the drama, and every other member of the company will be used in the race track scene. Manager La Sells seems to be sparing no expense whatever to make the new production a big success.

William Gilbert, the burlesque comedian, who has often been seen in this city at the Empire as a member of the team of Gilbert and Goldie, is dead. He appeared at the Empire about two months ago and scored a hit as a Hebrew judge in a burlesque court scene. He had been in poor health all season and had to discontinue work when he returned to New York after a tour of the mid-Western cities. His old partner, Walter Goldie, was greatly attached to him and declares he will never perform on the stage again. The team had been together for fifteen years. As noted in this column at the time of his local engagement, they formed a partnership in San Francisco on the days of the old Wigwam Theater—once a coast—and were among the most popular of vaudeville performers west of the Rocky mountains. It is not generally known that Gilbert was the brother-in-law of David Belasco, the celebrated manager and dramatist.

The new burlesque at Weber & Fields' Music Hall must be a very funny affair. It is a travesty on Frances Hodgson Burnett's children's play, "The Little Princess," which has been having such a successful run in New York, with little Millie James in the leading part. The opening scene of the new Weber-Fields show discloses a schoolroom, with Charles Bigelow as the school teacher, Miss Finch and Fay Templeton as "the little princesses." Of course, every other member of the cast has a chance to create mirth, but the big fall to these two. It has been Bigelow's first good opportunity since he joined the Weber-Fields forces, and he is making a tremendous hit. When he made his first appearance on the opening night of the piece last week, the audience laughed wonderfully got up and cheered every word and movement seemed to convulse the spectators. Peter F. Dailey plays the baby of the school in an absurd dress, and it is hoped that the merry crowd of burlesque play their engagement at the Park the first of June.

One of the strongest scenes of Soderman's "The Joy of Living," acted by Mrs. Patrick Campbell at English's the night before last, is the final interview between the Countess Beata (Mrs. Campbell) and her former lover. Beata's only wish is to prevent the death of her old lover at the hands of her husband. She knows that the lover is willing to meet her husband in a duel to the death, or, if that manner of execution is not granted him, that he will seek suicide as a penalty for having been the cause of the woman's dishonor. Rather

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thurs Lawrence (of Mr. Sothern's company) and Mr. Bell. It proved an artistic and financial success. A fortnight later it was presented under Mr. Goodfriend's direction at the Garden Theater, New York, and subsequently he took it to Boston and afterward played for a fortnight in the principal cities of New England and New York State. The venture proved a most interesting one, though not a very profitable one. As a distinguished physician remarked to Mr. Goodfriend at that time: "Young man, you are at least ten years ahead of your time. It is a great performance, but the general public is not yet ready for you."

Speaking of her joint authorship in "The Crossways," Mrs. Langtry had this to say last week to an Eastern interviewer: "The final idea for the play came to me about a year ago. The thought which is at the basis of it is that under the same conditions as likely to do wrong as one of lower station in life. The idea is an ethical one. I asked J. Hartley Manners, a member of my company, and a writer of one-act plays to collaborate with me. We worked for eight weeks on the play, and then produced it in Manchester, England, which considered a good test town, as it combines so many classes. It was well received, but we played it in twenty towns before we com-